(b) whether it is a fact that education for all the children is co-related with poverty alleviation;

(c) whether Government would make suitable amendments in the Constitution to empower Panchayats and Municipalities to open and run schools for children of all ages; and

(d) if so, whether Government would also provide suitable financial assistance to run the schools?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) The estimated percentage of allocation for education to GDP for the year 2000-01 is 4.11.

(b) Yes, Sir. Education is acknowledged the world over to be an instrument for empowerment and poverty alleviation.

(c) and (d) Pursuant to the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution, States are expected to devolve adequate powers, responsibilities and finances upon Panchayati Raj Institutions and other local bodies to enable them to prepare plans and implement schemes for socio-economic development including education.

Facilities for physically handicapped persons at examination centres

†2872. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that adequate facilities for physically handicapped persons/students are not provided at the examination centres of Central Board of Secondary Education;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that organisers at these centres do not provide any extra time to handicapped students; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, whether clear instructions are likely to be issued in respect of all examination centres by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (d) The Central Board of Secondary Education has informed that certain facilities are provided to the physically handicapped candidates appearing in the examination conducted by the Board at different examination centres. The Board has further informed that the booklet containing "Guidelines for Centre Superintendents" sent to the examination centres well before the start of Examinations, specifies the Rules/Instructions in regard to the facilities to be provided to handicapped candidates. As per these instructions, handicapped students are provided one hour extra in each paper of examination and also an amanuensis (writer), if needed by the handicapped candidates. These rules also contain the instructions to the Centre Superintendents for the seating arrangement of handicapped students preferably on the ground floor. In every room, where the handicapped students are seated, one special Assistant Superintendent is appointed so that handicapped examinees could be suitably facilitated.

Accessibility of handicapped to railway stations in A.P.

2873. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether suggestions have been received by the railways to make railway stations more accessible to handicapped people in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether the Railway have taken any action to implement these suggestions;

(d) the funds allotted for this purpose; and

(e) the time schedule for implementation of this proposal?